

NICS IMPROVEMENT
AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation, which makes a number of important improvements to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Congresswoman MCCARTHY and I first offered this legislation in 2002, when it became obvious to us that the NICS System was not working as Congress had intended it to. Those shortcomings were highlighted earlier this year when a gunman with a history of mental illness shot and killed 32 people and wounded many more. Cho Sun Hui had been adjudicated mentally ill by the state of Virginia, and under the law should not have been able to purchase the guns he used to kill his classmates. This legislation will ensure that individuals like Cho Sun Hui are included in the NICS database.

This legislation will also benefit lawful gun purchasers, many of whom face unnecessary delays when waiting for their background check to be completed. For the first time since the creation of NICS, it will live up to its name and be both national and instant. It also benefits those who have been wrongfully included in the NICS database by providing a mechanism for petitioning the government for removal from the system. This is an important improvement which will strengthen the second amendment rights of all Americans.

There are many people who should be thanked for their hard work on this bill, but I would like to take just a moment to recognize a few of those people. Representative CAROLYN MCCARTHY and I have worked on NICS improvement legislation for a few years now and while most would say we are an odd pair when it comes to this particular issue, I would suggest we are just two legislators trying to fix a legitimate problem. I have tremendous respect for Representative MCCARTHY; it has been an honor and privilege to work with her. I would also like to thank Senator CHUCK SCHUMER for his hard work and dedication. Also, I would like to extend my appreciation to Senators CRAIG and HATCH, as well as Representatives CONYERS and LAMAR SMITH. Lastly, I would like to thank the National Rifle Association. The NRA's support for this legislation has been invaluable and is a testament to the NRA's commitment to passing sensible and responsible legislation to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and the mentally ill.

MEDICARE, MEDICAID, AND SCHIP
EXTENSION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2499, the Medicare, Medicaid, and State Children's Health Insurance Program Extension Act of 2007. The measure includes an important, albeit limited, delay of the

scheduled 10 percent cut to Medicare's physician payment rates, which will help ensure quality care and access for Medicare patients without the cuts to vital Medicare programs I opposed previously. While not the expansion to reach an additional 4 million children I had hoped for, S. 2449 also extends the authorization for the State Children's Health Insurance Program until March 31, 2009, ensuring the needs of the 6 million children currently enrolled are met. I hope Congress will again forge ahead and continue negotiations to reach more of these eligible and uninsured children.

As co-chair of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus, I was extremely pleased to see the reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Program to fund type 1 diabetes research and type 2 treatment and prevention programs for Native Americans and Alaska Natives included in S. 2449. I am the lead Republican sponsor, with my colleague Representative DIANA DEGETTE, of legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives, H.R. 2762, to reauthorize the Special Diabetes Program for Type 1 Research and the Special Diabetes Program for Indians for 5 years and to increase the authorized funding level to \$200 million annually for each program. While a long-term extension is needed, in this difficult budget environment a short-term extension is a step in the right direction and I will continue to work next year with my colleagues to finish the job and secure a multi-year renewal so the critical long-term projects supported by this program can continue.

Since their creation in 1997, the Special Diabetes Programs have led to research breakthroughs through the Special Diabetes Program for Type 1 Research and have increased diabetes treatment and prevention programs for Native Americans and Alaska Natives through the Special Diabetes Program for Indians. Before this time, efforts on both fronts were in short supply. The Special Diabetes Programs have been reauthorized twice and have enjoyed broad bipartisan support in both the House and Senate; and H.R. 2762 continues in this spirit with 225 cosponsors.

The reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Programs is vitally important and an extension to September 30, 2009 is welcome.

With over 20 million adults and children in the U.S. affected by diabetes, the cost to the U.S. economy is estimated at \$132 billion per year in direct and indirect medical costs alone. Continued funding of the Special Diabetes Programs will ensure that the Federal effort to combat diabetes remains strong, as we ardently work to ensure that accelerated diabetes research, treatment, and prevention efforts with on the ground results in improving the lives of millions of people burdened with diabetes continue. I will continue to push for a longer extension of the Special Diabetes Programs.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND
SECURITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BARON P. HILL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, Congress has sent a clear message to the American people that

it is time for Government to raise CAFE standards for the first time in 32 years. We have worked very hard during the past year—negotiating language to increase the statutory standards by 40 percent. It is important that the entire Federal Government follow the guidelines set forth in H.R. 6 in order to provide regulatory certainty for the domestic auto industry, including manufacturers, suppliers, and dealers.

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY
MODERNIZATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2007

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I am submitting the following remarks for the record on H.R. 4040, the Consumer Product Safety Modernization Act of 2007, as clarification of House Report 110–501 to accompany the bill H.R. 4040, and which shall be considered part of the legislative history of this bill.

H.R. 4040 was ordered favorably reported to the House, amended, by the Committee on Energy and Commerce on December 18, 2007, by a recorded vote of 51 yeas and 0 nays. This landmark legislation, which enjoys broad, bipartisan support, was brought up before the House the next day, December 19. In light of this expedited consideration, the Committee was forced to file its report on an accelerated schedule. The following remarks are offered to clarify the Committee's intent with respect to certain provisions of H.R. 4040.

Section 101 establishes a Federal ban on lead in children's products beyond specified minute amounts, with section 101(a) addressing lead content in children's products. The intent of the Committee in providing a defined limit by weight is to establish a standard that is readily understood and easier to monitor for compliance. The Committee's primary goal is to provide standards that eliminate children's exposure to lead from toys and other children's products, and thereby further reduce the potential for harm to children's health.

The exception in paragraph (6) for inaccessible component parts that are contained in sealed coverings and casings is intended primarily for sealed electronic devices where component electrical parts and lead solder are necessary for the device to function.

Subsection (b) applies to lead paint in children's products. The alternative measure provided for in paragraph (1)(C) is intended to enable the Consumer Product Safety Commission, CPSC, to inspect more products and enforce the paint levels in less time than would otherwise occur if they were confined to testing products in the agency's laboratory.

In administering subsection (c), which gives the CPSC authority to extend, by rule, the implementation period for the new lead standards for an additional 180 days, the Committee expects the CPSC to give careful consideration to the effect on small- and medium-sized enterprises. The Committee intends for the agency to put the public health and safety first, but within that construct also to work with small- and medium-sized enterprises that may be disproportionately affected to help them to achieve compliance in a timely manner. In